

Isaiah 47:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms.

Analysis

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans. God commands Babylon to assume the posture of mourning and disgrace. The Hebrew dumiyah (silent, dumbstruck) indicates shocked speechlessness - the empire that roared commands across nations will be rendered mute. "Get thee into darkness" reverses Babylon's self-glorification as enlightened civilization; judgment consigns her to obscurity and death-like gloom (cf. Job 10:21-22).

"For thou shalt no more be called, The lady of kingdoms" strips Babylon's self-assigned title. The Hebrew gevereth (lady, mistress) suggests sovereign authority over subject peoples. Ancient Near Eastern imperial propaganda promoted rulers as cosmic lords deserving worship; Babylon styled herself queen of nations. God demolishes this pretension - Babylon's dominion was temporary permission, not inherent right, and divine decree terminates her reign.

From a Reformed perspective, this verse illustrates the collapse of all human glory apart from God. Worldly kingdoms and achievements, however impressive, are ephemeral. Only God's kingdom endures eternally. Babylon's fall foreshadows Revelation 18's judgment on spiritual Babylon - every system exalting itself against God will be brought low. The elect's security rests not in earthly power structures but in the unshakeable Kingdom of Christ.

Historical Context

This prophecy addresses Babylon at her historical zenith under Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562 BC) and predicts her imminent fall to Cyrus (539 BC). For nearly a century, Babylon dominated as the uncontested superpower - 'lady of kingdoms' accurately described her geopolitical supremacy. Yet within decades of Isaiah's prophecy, Persia conquered Babylon, which then declined into insignificance. By the time of Christ, the once-great city was an archaeological ruin. God's word proved certain; human empire proved fleeting.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What modern institutions or nations seem invincible yet, like Babylon, face certain obsolescence apart from divine blessing?
2. How does recognizing that all human glory is temporary and derivative from God reshape your ambitions and anxieties?
3. In what ways does Christ's eternal, unshakeable kingdom provide security that earthly powers cannot offer?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	כַּשְׁדִּים	בַּת	בַּתְּשַׁעַן	וּבְאֵי	דָּמָם	שָׁבֵר	
Sit	thou silent	and get	thee into darkness	O daughter	of the Chaldeans		H3588
H3427	H1748	H935	H2822	H1323	H3778		

לֹא	מַלְכּוֹת	גַּבְּרַת	לְךָ	אִקְרָאֵי	תוֹסֵףִי	לְךָ	מַלְכּוֹת:
H3808	for thou shalt no more	be called	H0	H7121	H1404	H4467	The lady of kingdoms
	H3254						

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 47:7 (Parallel theme): And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.

Habakkuk 2:20 (Parallel theme): But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him.

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